

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for changing an appearance of a plurality of mechanical reels device displayed on a gaming machine, the method comprising:

receiving a wager to play a base wagering game that utilizes the mechanical reels device;

detecting an indication to play a special feature game that utilizes the mechanical reels device; and

in response to detecting the indication, changing an appearance of the mechanical reels prior to playing the special feature game device to provide visual notification to a player that the special feature game is underway rather than the base wagering game and the changed appearance of the mechanical reels being maintained while the special feature game is played.

2. (Canceled) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical device of claim 1, wherein the base wagering game is selected from the group consisting of mechanical slots, video slots, video poker, video blackjack, video keno and video bingo.

3. (Currently Amended) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical reels device of claim 1, wherein the special feature game comprises a bonus game.

4. (Currently Amended) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical reels device of claim 1, wherein the special feature game comprises a secondary game requiring an additional wager.

5. (Currently Amended) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical reels device of claim 1, wherein changing the appearance comprises illuminating an illumination source of the gaming machine.

6. (Currently Amended) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical reels device of claim 5, wherein the illumination source is selected from the group consisting of black-light, colored light emitting diodes, white light emitting diodes, organic light emitting diodes, incandescent bulbs, colored film in conjunction with incandescent bulbs and colored film in conjunction with light emitting diodes.

7. (Currently Amended) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical reels device of claim 1, wherein changing the appearance comprises overlaying a video image upon the mechanical reels device.

8. (Canceled) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical device of claim 1, wherein the mechanical device comprises a plurality of mechanical spinning reels.

9. (Canceled) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical device of claim 1, wherein the mechanical device comprises mechanical dice.

10. (Canceled) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical device of claim 1, wherein the mechanical device comprises a wheel.

11. (Currently Amended) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical reels device of claim 1, wherein the indication is based on a selection by a player.

12. (Currently Amended) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical reels device of claim 1, wherein the indication is based on a triggering event occurring during base wagering game play.

13. (Currently Amended) A method for changing an appearance of a plurality of mechanical reels on a gaming machine, the method comprising:

receiving a wager to play a slot game that utilizes the plurality of mechanical reels;

detecting a first indication to play a bonus game that utilizes the plurality of mechanical reels;

in response to detecting the first indication, changing a color of the plurality of mechanical spinning reels prior to playing the bonus game and maintaining the changed color of the plurality of mechanical spinning reels during the playing of the bonus game;

detecting a second indication to terminate play of the bonus game; and

in response to detecting the second indication, restoring the color to the plurality of mechanical spinning reels.

14. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein changing the color comprises illuminating an illumination source of the gaming machine.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the illumination source is selected from the group consisting of black-light, colored light emitting diodes, white light emitting diodes, organic light emitting diodes, incandescent bulbs, colored film in conjunction with incandescent bulbs and colored film in conjunction with light emitting diodes.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein restoring the color comprises de- illuminating the illumination source.

17. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein changing the color comprises overlaying a video image upon the plurality of mechanical spinning reels.

18. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the first and second indication are based on a selection by a player.

19. (Original) The method of claim 13, wherein the first indication is based on a triggering event occurring during slot game play.

20. (Currently Amended) A gaming machine comprising:
a value input device;

a displayed plurality of mechanical reels device operable during both a base game and a special feature game;

an illumination source adapted to illuminate the displayed mechanical reels device; and

a controller operatively coupled to the value input device, the displayed mechanical reels device and the illumination source, the controller comprising a processor and a memory coupled to the processor, the controller being programmed to

allow a player to make a wager to play the base game,

detect a first indication to play the special feature game, and

in response to detecting the first indication, illuminate the illumination source to change an appearance of the displayed mechanical reels device prior to playing the special feature game to provide visual notification to a player that the special feature game is underway rather than the base game and the changed appearance of the mechanical reels is maintained while the special feature game is played.

21. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim 20, wherein the controller is further programmed to

detect a second indication to terminate the special feature game, and

in response to detecting the second indication, de-illuminate the illumination source to restore the appearance of the displayed mechanical reels device.

22. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 20, wherein the illumination source is selected from the group consisting of black-light, colored light emitting diodes, white light

emitting diodes, organic light emitting diodes, incandescent bulbs, colored film in conjunction with incandescent bulbs and colored film in conjunction with light emitting diodes.

23. (Currently Amended) The gaming machine of claim 20, wherein the change to the appearance of the displayed mechanical reels device comprises a color change to the displayed mechanical reels device.

24. (Canceled) The gaming machine of claim 20, wherein the base game is selected from the group consisting of mechanical slots, video slots, video poker, video blackjack, video keno and video bingo.

25. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 20, wherein the special feature game comprises a bonus game.

26. (Original) The gaming machine of claim 20, wherein the special feature game comprises a secondary game requiring an additional wager.

27. (Canceled) The gaming machine of claim 20, wherein the displayed mechanical device comprises a plurality of mechanical spinning reels.

28. (Canceled) The gaming machine of claim 20, wherein the displayed mechanical device comprises mechanical dice.

29. (Canceled) The gaming machine of claim 20, wherein the displayed mechanical device comprises a mechanical wheel.

30. (Currently Amended) A method for changing an appearance of a plurality of mechanical reels device displayed on a gaming machine, the method comprising:

receiving a wager to play a base game having a first mathematical model of player odds;

displaying a base game outcome with the mechanical reels device;

detecting an indication to play a special feature game having a second mathematical model of player odds, the second mathematical model being different from the first mathematical model;

in response to detecting the indication, changing an appearance of the mechanical reels prior to playing the special feature game and maintaining the changed appearance of the mechanical reels while the special feature game is played device; and

displaying a special feature game outcome with the mechanical reels device.

31. (Canceled) The method for changing the appearance of the mechanical device of claim 30, wherein the mechanical device includes a plurality of mechanical spinning reels that are rotated and stopped to place symbols on the reels in visual association with a display area.